

residents of Florida who are victims of Katrina. And I plead with my colleagues in Congress, do not turn your backs on the first victims of Katrina. Help those in need regardless of State line.

UPDATE ON IRAQ WAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I recently returned from Iraq and Afghanistan and Qatar with my administrative assistant Dan Scandling, and I wanted to give a report on what I saw and some recommendations for the Bush administration.

This was my third time to Iraq, second time to Afghanistan. This time we went to Baghdad, Tikrit, and Kirkuk. I have now been to all parts of Iraq except to Kurdish areas in the north. On previous trips we have been to Baghdad, Nasaria, Alkoot twice, and Basra.

I want to begin by praising the military, both active duty, Reserve and National Guard and note their very, very positive attitude and great, great morale. I also want to publicly acknowledge and thank them and praise their families in noting the sacrifices that they and their families are making. I also want to offer condolences to the families who have lost loved ones.

Before I go any further, Mr. Speaker, I want to read a passage from an online journal being kept by a chaplain I met from Gloucester, Virginia during my recent trip. We were in the Kirkuk area and he sat across the table from me and he told me this story.

We then got this from his Web page. It is incredibly moving and describes the quality of the men and women serving in uniform. It is the hero mission from a trip report excerpted with permission from Army chaplain J.D. Morris, "Chronicles of Pastor J.D., January 27, 2005."

He begins by saying, "I was abruptly caught off guard today by one of the administrative privates from flight operations. He told me that the flight operations battle captain was looking for me. When I arrived to see the battle captain, he told me that I was given a hero mission for a young soldier who had died in battle only hours before.

"I had about 20 minutes to ready myself and go back by Blackhawk with Specialist Tussant to recover the soldier's body from his unit and to escort the hero to another base where he would be sent home to his family. I found Specialist Tussant, gathered my gear, and made my way to the flight line to board the aircraft. When I arrived everyone was as sober as I.

"I prayed over the aircraft, received our mission briefing, and then we departed. Once arriving to the location of the unit, I found the fallen soldier's unit neatly and sharply in formation

next to the landing zone. Their clothes were muddy, their faces were downcast, and immediately you could sense their pain.

"Tussant and I immediately departed the aircraft and hastily made our way to the chaplain of the unit who was standing with his soldiers like a good shepherd. In the chaplain's arm was a large red Bible embraced against his chest.

"The soldiers carefully opened the back of the vehicle and solemnly and with honor removed the fallen friend from the vehicle. The black body bag hung in the hands of his friends.

"Tussant and I stood next to the vehicle and rendered a slow salute. We slowly and reverently followed the soldiers and the fallen comrade to the aircraft. Once arriving to the helicopter with the blades still churning and whirling, we all carefully placed the hero in the aircraft.

"The crew chief in the aircraft gently situated the new crew member, our hero. We stopped and prayed. As I turned to my rear, I looked back to see the rest of America's sons. Their chaplain, Chaplain Fisher, came to me, embraced me tightly and with a shattered voice said, "Thank you for being here and escorting our friend part way home. Thank the unit for us for their help."

"I could only return his embrace, pat his shoulder, and look into his face. I then boarded the aircraft. We began our ascent. As the helicopter blades aggressively moved the air and we began to rise off the ground, I looked to my right out the window to see the unit being swayed by the turbulence but still saluting their fallen hero.

"As long as I could see the hero's unit standing at attention in the blowing turbulence, saluting their combat buddy, the soldiers remained standing steadfast, saluting and honoring our hero.

"I certainly will never forget this hero mission. I was very quiet back to Speicher, which was the base. I could only think of the pain a family back home was getting ready to experience. I prayed for the family."

Why did I go to Iraq for the third time and Afghanistan for the second time? I have been hearing a constant drumbeat of negative stories all summer, so I wanted to assess the situation again with my own eyes. Not believe the administration, nor believe the media, but I wanted to see firsthand for myself.

I saw a lot of positive things. Hospitals are being renovated. Schools are being built. Pipelines are being repaired. And the Iraqi Army is being trained.

In the comparison of my first visit and my second visit and this visit 2 weeks ago, I could see the improvement that was being made. Security, however, is still the greatest challenge we face. Who did I meet with? I met with Lieutenant General Petraeus, Ambassador Khalilzad, members of

Iraqi leadership including the President, Prime Minister, and the Speaker of the National Assembly, NBC officials, folks from the Department of Justice, Department of Transportation, Department of Energy, the USAID, and a lot of soldiers from privates to generals.

What were my impressions? There is real progress being made, but there are still concerns. Security remains our greatest challenge. The country is far from being safe. Everywhere I went I was escorted by a full complement of heavily armed soldiers and security personnel; and even when riding in an armored vehicle we had to wear body armor and a helmet.

Until we get security under control, our efforts to rebuild Iraq will continue to be a challenge. If embassy officials, USAID staff, NGOs, nongovernmental organizations, contractors and, yes, even the media cannot move around the country without the fear of being attacked, our efforts to bring peace to Iraq will be hampered.

I was told that many contractors remain unwilling to bid on work because of the level of violence that still exists and those who take on projects spend enormous sums of money on private security.

I was also told the World Bank, a critical element to rebuilding Iraq, had refused to send staff because of security concerns.

But I saw improvement from when I was there the first time, an improvement from when I was there the second time. And this administration has failed to articulate the improvement that has been made in Iraq.

To really understand what has happened in Iraq, you have to talk to the service men and women, God bless them, who are serving or who have served there. They are the fathers, the mothers, the sons, daughters who put their lives on the line in this war on terror. They are the neighbor down the street who has been called up for Reserve or Guard duty. They are the Federal employee who has volunteered for a temporary assignment.

I was struck by the number of people saying the Iraq they see on TV every day is not the Iraq they know. In the mess halls, throughout the mess halls there are six to eight television sets that are on every day to CNN. One junior officer told me that he does not even watch the news anymore. Most soldiers said they were bewildered on what they were seeing on the news compared to what they know was taking place firsthand in Iraq.

In speaking with our service personnel, I was troubled to learn our troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan are well aware of the media coverage of anti-war protests in America. Especially the vigil of Cindy Sheehan. The televisions, as I said, in the mess hall and sleeping quarters are turned to CNN and MSNBC and Fox. I had several soldiers express wonderment on what is taking place back home.

□ 1730

At one point, an enlisted soldier pulled me aside and asked if he could talk to me in private. He said that he had been watching the news about the protests and wanted to know if the American people were still behind the soldiers. I reassured him they were, but he just looked at me and asked me again, almost as if he did not hear me, when he said he did not believe me. Then he said that when some of his fellow soldiers learned about the antiwar vigil, their morale was impacted.

I raise this point because I believe that it is important for the antiwar protesters to know how their actions may potentially be perceived by our soldiers on the front lines who are doing their jobs. Protest and dissent is the beauty of democracy, and it is important in a democracy, and everyone has the right to protest and dissent, but I think it is important that the antiwar demonstrators need to understand that our soldiers know about their actions. They need to realize that those actions can have a negative impact on the soldiers' spirits.

Personally, I believe that President Bush should have met with Cindy Sheehan. I still believe that President Bush should meet with Cindy Sheehan. I have read news accounts of some of the President's meetings with families of soldiers who have been killed in action. You cannot help but get emotional reading the reports.

The President's a compassionate man. He shares in the grief of those families who have lost a loved one, and I know that the burden on him as Commander in Chief is tremendous. So, therefore, I believe that he should include Cindy Sheehan in his next meeting with families of fallen or wounded soldiers.

Some of my thoughts on return. There are good people on both sides of the decision to send U.S. forces to Iraq. We are now there. We cannot abandon the mission to bring peace and stability to Iraq and its people. We need to recognize the rebuilding of Iraq needs to be based on a different timetable and not necessarily on our timetable or what we think is going to take place today.

The Bush administration needs to do a better job of explaining what failure to succeed in Iraq means to the average person in the United States. Let me state that again. The Bush administration needs to do a better job of explaining what failure to succeed in Iraq means to the American people.

I asked everyone I met with, at every meeting I went to, and when I would get up in the morning and go into the mess hall by myself at 5:30 or 6 o'clock in the morning, I would sit down with the soldiers and ask them and ask everyone this question: What does failure mean if we fail in Iraq? The responses were chilling.

Somalia, one person said. Have you seen the movie *Black Hawk Down*, he said. Another person said the former

Yugoslavia, and I was in the former Yugoslavia during the fighting in Sarajevo and Vukovar, and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and I were in Vukovar before the slaughter took place. All the people that we met with in Vukovar all were later slaughtered when the Serbs came in and slaughtered them in Vukovar.

Civil war. More foreign fighters pouring in across the border, the destabilization of the entire region. They said maybe the Kurdish area might make it. They said in the south the Iranians will come across the border for the Shiite and the Sunni triangle. Civil war, militia against militia. Killing and death and destruction. Foreign fighters coming in from Syria, pouring in, with more killing taking place.

Others said the destabilization of the gulf region. Some said perhaps the overthrow of the Jordanian Government. Others said perhaps the overthrow of the Saudi Government. Another said perhaps the overthrow of the Egyptian Government.

Oil exports. One person said, if you think oil's expensive now, if this region explodes, the price of oil in the West will be astronomical. The impact on the economy of the West.

Others said that Iraq will turn into a haven, a haven for terrorists, similar to what happened when the West left Afghanistan on its own, and then the Taliban was able to constitute itself. Osama bin Laden moved to Afghanistan and Kandahar and Jalalabad and Kabul. We saw the pictures of gunning down women in burqas, and we saw what took place, and there will be a haven for terrorists to operate.

Loss of American credibility. Danger, danger. We put in our report: danger to the American people. More emphasis with regard to the Jihadists in the West thinking that they can bring terror again. Thirty people from my congressional district died in the attack on the Pentagon, and we all know what took place with regard to the World Trade Center because we just went there and remembered on 9/11 what took place.

The administration has failed to tell the American people the ramifications of failure in Iraq. If we were to pull out of Iraq and fail in Iraq, the ramifications on the war on terror are very, very bad for the average American.

I want to take a few minutes to read what others are saying about the potential consequences of failure in Iraq.

From Lawrence Kaplan, senior editor at New Republic, speaking at a recent conference by Notre Dame's Kroc Institute and Fordham University's Center on Religion and Culture, said the following: "Preventing Iraq from coming apart at the seams means preventing the country from becoming what Afghanistan was until recently, a vacuum filled by terrorist organizations, which is what one National Intelligence Council report suggested Iraq is now fast becoming."

"Hence, Americans must ask themselves exactly what they owe Iraq."

"If U.S. policy truly has a moral component," and our policy must have a moral component, "if U.S. policy truly has a moral component," he said, which I believe it does, "the answer must be something better, or, at the very least, not worse, than what went before."

From Kenneth Pollack, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institute, a distinguished scholar in this region, in an op-ed that ran in the New York Times on July 1, said, "No matter what one thinks of the invasion, it is clearly in our best interest, to say nothing of the Arab world's, that we succeed in Iraq."

From Francis Fukuyama, professor of international political economy at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, in a New York Times op-ed piece on August 31, said the following: "If the United States withdraws prematurely, Iraq will slide into greater chaos. That would set off a chain of unfortunate events that will further damage American credibility around the world."

From Michael Ledeen of the American Enterprise Institute and author of, "Making War on the Terror Masters," in a June 17 article in the Dallas Morning News said, "A precipitous U.S. withdrawal would obviously encourage the terrorists and the countries that support them. It would probably encourage them to expand their activities because they, too, are fairly focused against us in Iraq right now. They'd probably be more inclined to attack us elsewhere."

Keep in mind the two attacks, the London subway bombings not too long ago, that al Qaeda has now taken credit for.

In the same article, Tony Cordesman, who is a distinguished military analyst for the Center for Strategic and International Studies said, "A withdrawal that left an Iraqi Government unable to defend itself would shatter U.S. standing in the Middle East, making it harder for moderate Arabs to stand up to Islamic extremists who hope to overthrow their governments."

"Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan and other U.S. allies would find it very, very hard to hold together and deal with this problem without distancing themselves from the United States."

Then he went on to say, "And we need to remember that we are talking about a region in the gulf with about 40 percent of the world's proven oil resources."

That is unbelievable. Now, why has the administration not laid out carefully to the American people what the ramifications are to our country and our citizens of failure? Time is not on the side of the administration. There is a sense that public support is waning in both the United States and Great Britain. No one believes we will lose the war in Iraq. If the war in Iraq is lost, it will not be lost in Iraq. It will be lost here at home. One general officer told me point blank: The center of gravity for our success in Iraq is the American public.

The Bush administration also needs to do a better job of letting the American people know how they can participate in this effort. In World War II, my dad served in World War II. We had war bonds. We had victory gardens. We had scrap metal collections. The American public supports the troops and wants to do more. There ought to be more opportunities where the administration can let the American people know how they can participate to help the effort, to help the young men and women who are serving in the military and their families.

For example, at a rest and relaxation facility in Qatar, there is a need for clothes for servicemen and -women after their activities, and they get 4 or 5 days off. They come to this center, and they have no shirts, and they have no shaving gear. There they have skirts and dresses and T-shirts and sweatshirts to wear. Well, the American people, if they knew it, would love to participate, would love to help. And the administration has to do a better job of telling the American people how they can participate and help, because there are many Americans wearing the uniform today and their families who are making a major sacrifice. Others would like to participate and be part of that.

Some of the major recommendations: The Bush administration should select a group of capable and distinguished individuals, some with a military background and others with extensive foreign policy experience, to go to Iraq and other parts of the gulf region and Afghanistan to comprehensively review our efforts. All the individuals, and I can name who they would be but I think it would be inappropriate because they have to be picked by others, but all of the individuals selected would be known for their honesty, for their integrity, for their competence, for their patriotism. They would love their country more than they would love their political party.

The group would essentially provide what I call fresh eyes on the target; the target, of course, being how we bring about success in Iraq and lead to whereby our young men and women can return home.

Upon this group's return, they would report to the President and the Congress, but more importantly, they would report to the American people. The motive would not be to find fault. One can always go back and say there were mistakes. Quite frankly, I believe that we should have never disbanded the Iraqi Army. But it would be a forward-looking report, to see what we can do in the best interests of our servicemen and how we can bring about success.

An independent, comprehensive review could help assure Americans, no matter what their position is on the war, that every effort is being made to protect our troops and realize their goal of a secure and peaceful Iraq, that it would look at what is going right

and what is going wrong. I recognize that the Bush administration has sent other individuals to Iraq to assess the ongoing situation, but what I call "fresh eyes review" would be different, in that rather than just reporting back to the President or the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of State, this group would also report back to the Congress and to the American people.

Frankly, I believe the administration has a moral obligation to the American people to do this and to provide this information. There are no downsides in such a review. In our daily lives, we regularly seek second opinions. As chairman of the House appropriations subcommittee with oversight of the State Department and the Justice Department, in addition to being the author of the National Commission on Terrorism, later known as the Bremer Commission, I am keenly aware of what is at stake if we fail to achieve our goals in Iraq.

□ 1745

In September of 1998, when I returned from having been in Algeria, where terrorism has killed over 100,000 people, the bombing of our embassy in Kenya and in Tanzania took place, and I introduced a bill to create the National Commission on Terror. When I introduced the bill on the floor of this House, I said that Osama bin Laden lived in Sudan from 1991 to 1996. There was very little interest by the Clinton administration for this. Very few agencies wanted to participate and cooperate, but, finally, they did.

This is the report of the Bremer Commission. It says, "Countering the Changing Threat of International Terrorism," and it came out in the year 2000. And distinguished Members served on the commission, bipartisan members of the commission, Republican and Democratic members of the commission. In fact, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN), who is the ranking Democrat on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence today was on the commission. The commission was made up of Paul Bremer; Maurice Sonnenberg; Richard Betts; Wayne Downing, who is a U.S. Army General, retired, with expertise; JANE HARMAN, a good Member of the House; Fred Ikle; Juliette Kayyem; John Lewis, Jr.; Gardner Peckham; and James Woolsey, who was the head of the CIA.

On the cover of the commission report that they came out with is a picture of the World Trade Center on fire. Now, the World Trade Center bombing took place on September 11, 2001. This was the picture of the World Trade Center on fire from the attack that took place in 1993, and no one paid any attention to it. They neglected it.

This group, this National Commission on Terror, could ensure that we are successful in this effort. They would travel to all parts of Iraq; the Shi'a south, the central Sunni Triangle, and the north, where the Kurds

reside. They would have to go to the region for 7 to 10 days to 2 weeks. They would meet with general officers, junior officers, NCOs, specialists and privates in Iraq and in Afghanistan. They would meet with embassy officials and other Federal Government employees working in Baghdad. They would meet with civilian contractors and NGOs, nongovernmental organizations operating in the country. They would meet with Iraqi leaders and also ordinary Iraqis in country towns and villages.

And to better educate the American public about our ongoing efforts in Iraq and the gulf region, perhaps a select group of media should also accompany this group during its visit, not as a tool for U.S. propaganda but to ensure transparency. This would give the media the opportunity to travel to all parts of the country and report on both the good and the bad.

Because as many of my colleagues know, it is very difficult for the media to move around Iraq. The media has lost roughly 60-some people. Media have died. It is very difficult to get from point A to point B, from Baghdad to Kirkuk, or Baghdad to Nasaria, or Baghdad to Tikrit. This would give the media the opportunity to travel to all parts and to report on both the good and the bad. And the pool would include both broadcast and print media.

This fresh-eyes review would assess answers to such questions as the following:

How accurate a picture do we have of the insurgency? What is the realistic strength of the insurgency? Is the insurgency growing or diminishing in capability? What can we do to get better tactical intelligence on the enemy? And what will it take to get actionable intelligence? How reliable and effective is the growing Iraqi security establishment? What is its ethnic makeup? What is the power and effectiveness of local militias in the country, and how much of a problem do they pose in the longer term for the Iraqi Government? What role is Iran playing in the evolving political and security situation in Iraq?

We heard that the Iranians have poured across the border and are a destabilizing influence in what is taking place in Iraq. They would take a look at that.

What role is Syria playing? We have been told that the Syrians are allowing foreign fighters to pour across their border. This group could look at that and see if that is the case and see if there are ways of securing the Syrian border.

They would look at what will it take in terms of resources and organization and time to effectively control the Iraqi borders. Is there an anti-sabotage strategy to protect the energy infrastructure? If so, why is it not working? Are there alternatives?

They would look at what is the status of the efforts to organize the Iraqi ministries and get them up and running. Is progress being made? If not,

what more needs to be done? What criteria should guide the pace of withdrawal of American and Coalition Forces?

We owe it to the thousands of men and women who are in harm's way to test the process and ask the questions. We owe it to the American people. I urge the administration, having been there three times in Iraq, two times by myself, without anybody telling me where I could go or where I could not go, and two times in Afghanistan, where I led the first congressional delegation to Afghanistan with the gentleman from Lancaster, Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS), and my best friend and former Congressman Tony Hall of Ohio. We owe it to the American public.

So in closing, Mr. Speaker, I urge the administration to act quickly to put together this team to offer fresh eyes on the target. There is nothing to lose.

And, lastly, Mr. Speaker, we owe it to the men and women who are mentioned in this article that I opened up with in the excerpts by Army Chaplain J. D. Moore, "Hero Mission." I am asking this administration to support this group.

Mr. Speaker, I submit herewith for the RECORD the commission report I referred to earlier.

[Report from the National Commission on Terrorism]

COUNTERING THE CHANGING THREAT OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Appendix C: Commission Members and Staff COMMISSIONERS

L. Paul Bremer III, Chairman, is the Managing Director of Kissinger Associates. During a 23-year career in the American diplomatic service, Ambassador Bremer served in Asia, Africa, Europe and Washington, D.C./ He was Ambassador to the Netherlands from 1983 to 1986. From 1986-1989, he served as Ambassador-at-Large for Counter-Terrorism, where he was responsible for developing and implementing America's global policies to combat terrorism.

Maurice Sonnenberg, Vice Chairman, is the senior international advisor to the investment banking firm of Bear, Stearns & Co. Inc. and the senior international advisor to the law firm of Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP. He is a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. He recently served as a member of the U.S. Commission on Reducing and Protecting Government Secrecy and as the senior advisor to the U.S. Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the U.S. Intelligence Community.

Richard K. Betts is Leo A. Shifrin Professor of War and Peace Studies in the political science department, Director of the Institute of War and Peace Studies, and Director of the International Security Policy program in the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University. He is also Director of National Security Studies and Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, and author of "Surprise Attack: Lesson for Defense Planning."

Wayne A. Downing, General, U.S. Army, retired in 1996 after a 34-year career, where he served in a variety of command assignments in infantry, armored, special operations and joint units culminating in his appointment as the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Special Operations Command. Since retirement, he was appointed to assess the 1996 terrorist attack on the U.S. base at Khobar

Towers, Saudi Arabia, and to make recommendations to protect people and facilities world wide from terrorist attack. General Downing serves on several boards and panels in both the private and government sectors.

Jane Harman just completed a year as Regents Professor at U.C.L.A. where she taught at the Department of Political Science and Center for International Relations. Harman represented California's 36th Congressional District from 1992-1998 where she served on the National Security, Science and Intelligence Committees. Prior government experience includes Senate Counsel, White House Deputy Cabinet Secretary and DoD Special Counsel. Harman is currently seeking election to her former seat.

Fred C. Iklé is a Distinguished Scholar, Center for Strategic & International Studies. Dr. Iklé is Chairman of the Board of Telos Corporation and a Director of the Zurich-American Insurance Companies and of CMC Energy Services. Prior to joining the Center, Dr. Iklé served as Undersecretary of Defense for Policy and Director for the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

Juliette N. Kayyem is an Associate of the Executive Session on Domestic Preparedness, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. She writes and teaches courses on counter-terrorism policy and the law. Ms. Kayyem has most recently served as a legal advisor to the Attorney General at the U.S. Department of Justice and as Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.

John F. Lewis, Jr. is Director of Global Security for Goldman, Sachs & Co., New York. Previously, he was Assistant Director-in-Charge of the National Security Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Mr. Lewis managed the FBI's national counter-intelligence and counterterrorism programs. Mr. Lewis has held a variety of positions, including an appointment as Director of Intelligence and CI Programs, National Security Staff and previous Chairman of the International Association of Chiefs of Police Committee on Terrorism.

Gardner Peckham is Managing Director of the government relations firm of Black, Kelly, Scruggs & Healey with a practice focused on international trade, defense and foreign policy issues. Prior to joining the firm, Mr. Peckham served as Senior Policy Advisor to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives. He also held several other senior positions in Congress and during the Bush Administration served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs at the U.S. Department of State and Director for Legislative Affairs at the National Security Council Staff.

R. James Woolsey is a partner at the law firm of Shea & Gardner with a practice in the fields of civil litigation, alternative dispute resolution, and corporate transactions; he also serves on several corporate boards. Previous to returning to the firm, Mr. Woolsey served as Director of Central Intelligence. His U.S. Government service includes Ambassador to the Negotiations on CFE, Under Secretary of the Navy, and General Counsel of the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services. He has served on many Presidential and Congressional delegations, boards, and commissions.

IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SODREL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 60 min-

utes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I cannot think how we could have had two better speeches than that of the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), which he just made, and mine. My real sadness about this House is that this is not being done in a debate where all the Members are talking and listening about this very, very important issue.

The question that I think the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) well raises is, why are we in Iraq? Now, I recently was in Jordan, and I was confronted by many of the Iraqis who have fled from Baghdad and other parts of Iraq. There are about a million Iraqis of middle class and above all living in Amman. The prices of real estate have gone up. It is very hard to find a hotel room. They have left.

I sat at dinner with a number of them, and the question that many of them asked me was, why is the United States in Iraq? And I sort of dismissed the ideas that have been advanced at various times in this Hall, that we are there for weapons of mass destruction, or we are there because of al Qaeda. Many people say we are there for oil. I think that is way too simplistic an explanation for what is going on.

Are we there to stop terrorism? Well, it is very hard to look at what is going on in Iraq and say that what we have done is to end terror. Rather, it seems like we have become a breeding ground and a training ground for terrorists.

After I had exhausted my ideas about what it might be about, I asked the Iraqis to tell me what they thought this was about. And they said, well, it is pretty clear that what your goal was, and you succeeded almost at this point, in dividing Iraq into three pieces and destroying Iraq as ever being an Arab nation. That was your goal from the start; and you have, by every decision you have made, you have worked in that direction.

Now, it was not a design that was clear. People have not understood this, in large measure because it was never enunciated in a public way by public figures saying we are going into Iraq to destroy it. We have talked about liberty, we have talked about democracy, we have talked about every other thing under the sun except the fact that the effect of our actions have been to destroy Iraq.

Now I will take you back to the appointment of the first governor of Iraq. Most people, if you ask them who that was, they cannot remember the name. It was a retired army general by the name of Jay Garner. He was appointed and he went over there, and he had the idea that perhaps the Iraqis should begin to take their own existence, now that Baghdad had fallen and with the Americans in control militarily, let the Iraqis put their country back together.